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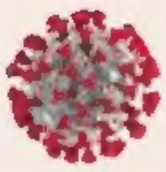
JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT

April 20: **13,69,541 doses**
April 21: **16,12,163 doses**
TOTAL DOSES: **1,87,24,33,529**

NATIONWIDE	APR 20	APR 21
Fresh cases	2,067	2,380
Recoveries	1,547	1,231
Deaths	40	56

KARNATAKA	APR 20	APR 21
Fresh cases	61	100
Recoveries	49	49
Deaths	0	0



'OMICRON SUB-VARIANT BA.2.12 BEHIND DELHI COVID SURGE'

The Omicron sublineage has been detected in a majority of the samples sequenced from Delhi in April, sources said

MUTANT BEHIND U.S. SPIKE IN DELHI SAMPLES

According to Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) sources, Omicron variant derivative BA.2.12.1 has also been found in a few samples in Delhi. This sub-variant is said to be contributing to the recent rise in cases in the US. BA.2.12 (52% samples) and BA.2.10 (11%) are showing high transmission rates, official sources said | P9

ANOTHER RARE MUTANT DETECTED IN HARYANA

- Official said the same sub-variants have been found in samples sequenced in neighbouring districts in UP and Haryana, too
- After visiting the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M) Health Secretary J Radhakrishnan said 12 people at the campus have tested Covid-19 positive.

300
SAMPLES WERE GENOME SEQUENCED IN DELHI IN THE FIRST FORTNIGHT OF APRIL

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

PUII exams give murder accused minor a miss

SHILPA P @ Bengaluru

A 17-year-old juvenile, accused of murdering his mother, and who was not allowed to write his second-year PU exam, beginning Friday, was on Thursday told that he could write the papers. This came about after officials intervened, following a story published online by *TNIE* on Thursday.

EXPRESS IMPACT

DGP Praveen Sood, Education department principal secretary S Selvakumar and PU Board Director R Ramachandran assured the boy that they would help him write the theory papers, though he had missed his practical exams.

Ironically, by the time the officials got his college to allow him to attend exams, the teenager – depressed and disappointed – had returned to his native Ibrahimpura of Shahpur taluk in Yadgir district on Wednesday night. The boy is a resident of Tavarekere in Bengaluru. By the time he could be contacted over phone via his poor illiterate relatives, and conveyed that he could write the theory exam, it was Thursday evening, and he was confused whether he should write only the theory exam. When TNIE contacted him, he sobbed helplessly about missing exams this year. Vijay (name changed) said, "On February 7, my mother was allegedly killed by my stepfather, her first husband. But I was accused in the case and produced before the Juvenile Justice Board in Bengaluru and was sent to the Observation Home. My father was also murdered five years ago. So my guardians were expected to give a formal letter to the JJB to get me bail for the practical exams on March 2, 3 and 4. But my guardians are illiterate, they failed to complete formalities." P5

Five hijab petitioners may skip PU examination

Udupi : Five PU II students who had challenged the State government against hijab ban have refused to collect their exam hall tickets. Sadik, a CFI leader, said they will try to write exams wearing hijab. P2

Holidays cut

TO OVERCOME LEARNING LOSS

With at least 40 per cent loss of physical classes due to pandemic over the past two academic years, the education department has come up with a new calendar for the coming academic year. P2

PK moots non-Gandhi as Congress president

SHAHID FARIDI @ New Delhi

ELECTION strategist Prashant Kishor has asked the Congress leadership to elect a non-Gandhi as party president while leaving the three important posts of UPA Chairman, parliamentary board chief and general secretary coordination for Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, respectively.

In his presentation to the Congress leadership, Kishor suggested forming of a shadow Cabinet with 20-25 experienced and new politicians and a brain trust of 10-12 SMEs and global authorities "to effectively represent the voice of the people both in Parliament and outside". This, he said, would go a long way in countering "elected autocracy" with "collective credibility".

The strategist said the "traditional media is heavily biased towards the ruling party" and the "current dispensation's vast network combines the resources of government and party to maintain news stranglehold". He also said that "timing and choice of propagation for INC is lopsided and not driven by data or science." He suggested creating "a network of ideologically inclined digital supporters divided into 543 digital zones, each with an ecosystem of approximately five lakh digitally connected people".

Under the title of "winning arithmetic," he said to win the general elections 45% of votes cast or 30 crore votes are needed. He focused on eight key groups of population to win these votes from "core supporters": women, farmers, youth, SC, ST, landless labourers, middle class and urban poor. The party, he suggested, should use the theme of "Gandhi, Truth, *Bharosa* versus Godse, *Jhooth*, *Jhansa*". To take on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said the Congress could expose "the true character and failures of Modi" and use slogans like "*hanikarak* Modi" and "Modi *jaane wale hain*".

Kishor said the party should not give ticket or organisational posts to those facing charges of heinous crimes, and strictly implement the principle of one-man-one-post. Critiquing the "jaded and aged leadership," he said it had "complete disconnect with the grassroots" and the party had "ceased working as a democratic organization" under them. He highlighted the sense of entitlement and sycophancy in the party and said only 23 out of 118 central leaders of the party are elected. CONTINUED ON: P9

Prashant Kishor

Showing a mirror to the party

Kishor said between 1885 and 1998, the party had 61 presidents, whereas between 1998 and 2022, the party has had only two presidents (Sonia 21 years and Rahul 2 years). He pointed out that more than 65% district presidents and 90% block presidents have not ever had a meeting with the Congress president or even the AICC secretary

Last big campaign

The last mass public outreach campaign by the Congress was Rajiv Gandhi's Bharat Yatra in 1990. The party has not undertaken any "pan-India protest or agitational campaign that has lasted for more than 24 hours since 2014," he added

£1 BN DEALS DONE AS UK PM COMES CALLING

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA AND YESHI SELI
@ Ahmedabad / New Delhi

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson had business on mind when he began his two-day trip to India on Thursday. His first stop at Ahemdabad after a roadshow from the airport to his hotel saw him meeting industrialist Gautam Adani and inaugurating JCB India's sixth manufacturing plant in Vadodara.

He is expected to announce commercial deals worth £1 billion in new investments and export deals in areas from software engineering to health, creating almost 11,000 jobs in the UK. Both sides will confirm major new science and tech collaborations, including a digital health partnership and a joint investment fund for Indian deep-tech and AI start-ups.

Hoping to deepen security and defence ties as well, Johnson said: "India & UK share anxieties about autocracies around the world, we're both democracies and we want to stick together."

On Russia, Johnson agreed India and Russia have historically a very different a relationship. "We have to reflect on that reality, but clearly, I'll be talking about it to Narendra Modi."

During his visit to the Gandhi ashram in Sabarmati, Johnson was amazed to learn about the Salt Satyagraha — the protest launched by the Mahatma against the tax imposed on salt by the British Raj. "Did we impose a tax on salt?" he asked the accompaning British High Commissioner Alex Ellis. When he replied in the affirmative, Johnson said, "Quite astonishing."

Following the UK-India Enhanced Trade Partnership launched by both prime ministers last year, new measures will now be announced to make it easier to export UK-made medical devices to India, the British High Commission said in a statement.

KEY DEALS

- British online food delivery company Deliveroo to set up its largest technology hub outside of the UK in Hyderabad
- British climate tech firm Carbon Masters to implement a waste management project in Bengaluru
- Ashok Leyland group company Switch Mobility to invest £300 in UK and India
- Chennai-based TVS Motor Company to invest £100 million in iconic British brand Norton Motorcycle
- Byjus's to invest £15 million in the UK
- Microlabs to invest £10 million in the UK
- Bengaluru-based IT solutions provider Mphasis to invest £5 million in UK
- TVS Supply Chain Solutions to invest £4 million to expand UK operations

Two Covid-19 sub-variants found in B'luru

CHETANA BELAGERE @ Bengaluru

TWO new SARS-CoV-2 mutants, BA.2.10 and BA.2.12, related to the Omicron sub-variant BA.2, have been found in Bengaluru, by INSACOG attached labs. However, sources, requesting anonymity, claimed that the data is too meagre to know the transmissibility features of these sublineages of BA.2.

"As per GISAID data, we have found BA.2.10 and BA.2.12, both sublineages of BA.2, in a few samples from Bengaluru. However, we need more samples and data to know more on this mutation. It is an alias of B.1.1.529.2.10, lineage from pango designation issue #496," explained a scientist attached to the lab, seeking anonymity.

Bengaluru Urban has, in the past seven days, reported 300 cases, and the district has 1,428 active cases, according to data shared by the health department on Thursday. Special Commissioner BBMP (Health) Dr K V Thrilok Chandra, after a recent Covid review meeting, said he has no knowledge of any new mutation but has taken measures to ramp up surveillance in the city, to ensure they don't miss any new variant. P3

K'TAKA TOUCHES 100 CASES

Daily Covid cases in Karnataka touched 100 for the first time in the past 30 days, with 91 cases in Bengaluru. Karnataka's total active cases as on Thursday were 1,550, while deaths remained zero.

CBI files first chargesheet in NSE scam

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

THE Central Bureau of Investigation on Thursday filed its first chargesheet against former NSE MD & CEO Chitra Ramakrishna and ex-group operating officer Anand Subramanian in connection with the co-location scam case. Ramkrishna and Subramanian are currently in judicial custody. Sources said the CBI has grilled the duo multiple times along with experts from related fields to ferret out technical information on the co-location scam. Subramanian's role has been ascertained, a source claimed.

Chitra Ramakrishna

In the co-location facility offered by NSE, brokers could place their servers within the exchange premises for faster access to the markets. It is alleged that some brokers in connivance with insiders abused the algorithm and the co-location facility to make windfall profits.

Old structure below mosque sparks debate

VINCENT D'SOUZA @ Mangaluru

DAKSHINA Kannada district administration on Thursday stopped the renovation of a centuries-old mosque in Malali near Ganjimutt on the outskirts of Mangaluru city after an old structure that had remained hidden for long emerged, which Hindutva outfits claimed it to be a temple.

Deputy Commissioner KV Rajendra said that after the front portion of the mosque was pulled down as part of the renovation, an old structure — which some said resembled a place of worship of "some other religion" — was discovered behind it. Soon, pictures of the rear structure went viral with people indulging in a debate over it on social media over what that hidden structure was.

The DC then rushed Mangaluru tahsildar Purandara to the spot, and the latter convinced the mosque management to stop the renovation works till the confusion was cleared, and security was beefed up at the mosque.

A pile of debris in front of the mosque during renovation EXPRESS

Later in the day, the DC in a statement said: "District administration is looking into the old land records and entries regarding the ownership details. We will get reports from both, the Endowment Department and the Waqf Board. We will check the veracity of the claims and take an appropriate decision very soon."

Until then, the DC said, he has instructed the stakeholders to maintain a status quo, while appealing to the public to maintain peace and not jump to conclusions. CONTINUED ON: P5

EXPRESS READ

Maulvi Pathan held for Hubballi riots

Hubballi: The Hubballi police on Thursday arrested Wasim Pathan, a maulvi, who allegedly instigated a mob which had gathered outside the Old Hubballi Police Station on April 16 night to protest against a derogatory social media post. Pathan said police had requested him to climb the police vehicle. P4

KEJRIWAL PROMISES CLEAN GOVERNMENT

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

AFTER Delhi and Punjab, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has cast its eye on Karnataka, ahead of the 2023 assembly polls, with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal appealing to the people to vote for the party promising zero-corruption governance.

Speaking at the farmers' rally organised by the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) faction headed by Kodihalli Chandrashekar at National College Grounds here on Thursday, Kejriwal trained his guns on the BJP, terming it a "rioters' party".

"The entire country knows which party is behind the riots happening across the country. If there is any party for 'goondas', it is BJP," he stated. He alleged that the BJP leadership is supporting rapists and killers of farmers, pointing to the Lakhimpur Kheri incident where four farmers were mowed down by Union minister Ajay Mishra Teni's son Ashish Mishra.

CONTINUED ON: P4

People who see challenges differently, see energy differently.

What the world needs now is cleaner power – made possible by people who bring a new perspective to the challenge. A world where more renewable energy can power more lives. And where gas power and a modern grid help provide energy whenever and wherever it's needed. Because seeing a cleaner world isn't something that's far in the future. It's the world we're building now.

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Building a world that works